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TOWN MEETING



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"GREAT ISSUES IN EDUCATION"

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MORTIMER J. ADLER

Moderators:

GORDON DUPEE

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Auspices Great Books Foundation
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BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

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"GREAT ISSUES IN EDUCATION"

ANNOUNCER: TOWN MEETING comes to you tonight from Aspen, Colorado, one of the most picturesque and famous resorts and cultural centers in America. Here in the colorful Aspen Opera House are men and women from all over the United States, attending the summer institute of The Great Books Foundation. For the past week, in the true Town Hall tradition, they have exchanged ideas on matters of interest to educators, parents and students. Arranged by The Great Books Foundation, the basis for these informal discussions have been writings as old as Plato and Aristotle and as recent as John Dewey and John Hersey. The Great Books Foundation, one of the most stimulating adult educational programs of our time, brings together groups of adults who meet for two hours every other week and discuss great books which have been read by the entire group in advance. It is in this same spirit of thoughtful evaluation of ideas that TOWN MEETING presents this symposium on the most vital issues in the field of education.

Now, to introduce our TOWN MEETING guests, here is William R. Traum, Director of Radio for Town Hall.

MR. TRAUM: Good evening, friends. TOWN MEETING has assembled tonight in this historic Opera House at Aspen, Colorado -- and from this lofty altitude of 8,000 feet, we shall try to bring down to earth some of the problems existing today on every level of education. In our audience and on the stage are men and women vitally concerned with these problems -- as, indeed, are all parents and children throughout the country. This theme "Great Issues in Education" is being developed into a nationwide discussion project by The Great Books Foundation from whose summer institute our program at Aspen originates tonight. It is timely, too, with many local conferences arranged by the National Citizens Commission for Public Schools, leading up to the White House Conference on education in late November.

With the increased birthrate in the United States, our school system today is suffering from the acute growing pains of unprecedented expansion. Education is plagued by shortage -- shortage of teachers, shortage of facilities, of money -- and, according to some critics, a shortage of ideas. In addition, there is the continuing issue on the content of education -- what is being taught and how it is being taught? Should we teach know-how or knowledge? Which is more important -- intellectual power or specialization? Are we overemphasizing one at the expense of the other? TOWN MEETING tonight looks for some of the answers from two educators, a businessman, and a labor leader -- all four keenly interested in the crises confronting American education. Moderating our discussion later will be the President of The Great Books Foundation, Mr. Gordon Dupee.

Let us hear first from Homer C. Wadsworth of Kansas City. A former resident of Pittsburgh where he served in several municipal capacities, including that of Director of Parks and Recreation, Mr. Wadsworth more recently was vice-president of the New School for Social Research in New York. He is now executive director of the Kansas City Association of Trusts and Foundations and a member of the Kansas City Board of Education. Here is Homer C. Wadsworth!

MR. WADSWORTH: Education has been an issue of the greatest importance, and a subject of endless debate, in every generation. In our day the great issues in education are of both a practical and philosophical nature. They are practical in that there exists real and pressing need for more teachers and for a greatly expanded school plant. They are philosophical in that they concern the purposes of education, the conception of what ought to be the aim and end of educational effort. Our central problem is one of developing a perspective that will accord to each general aspect of our problem an appropriate degree of emphasis.

On the practical side, the explosion of population since 1940 is the primary source of many of our current problems. The issue here is simply a question of means, that is, how as a people we may best finance the additional facilities and services required, and through what administrative channels most efficiently to get the job done.

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A more difficult issue arises from the increased amounts of education now demanded by the American people, and the great variations of interest and aptitude represented among those now attending our schools in such large numbers. There are today more than 7 million children between 14 and 17 years of age who are attending our high schools, or about 85% of all children within this age range. No country in history has ever attempted public education on such a scale. No other country today now gives secondary education of any kind to more than 20% of its youth.

A less tangible issue and yet one of the greatest importance arises from the mood of the American people -- a mood that encourages many illusions about the purposes of education. Americans believe in education -- indeed, they entertain to a remarkable degree the rather naive notion that education is the royal road to fame and fortune for every child. A very wise man once said that education is the acquisition of the art of using knowledge -- a quest, indeed, that begins at birth and ends with death. One cannot expect it to pay off in other than the coin of personal happiness and constructive service to society.

The apparatus required to operate our vast educational system tends to obscure the central fact that the key to education is the quality of the teacher; all else is subordinate to his performance. His is the delicate task of inspiring interest and confidence, a zest for knowledge, a respect for human values and a capacity for self-discipline.

That we need many more teachers is quite clear. It is equally clear that we must accord to the teacher a more honorable place in society and pay him well for the vital service that he performs. We must, as well, protect the freedom of the teacher and the student in this era of uncertainty against those who conceive education as a propaganda affair, and regard the process of learning as filling human minds with safe and sane notions. We must broaden teacher training in many respects, and attract into its ranks more people who have wisdom as well as knowledge.

We are entering an era of many dangers, the most significant of which may be our inability to use well the great amounts of leisure that are the main product of a machine age. Our educational system is our main instrument for shaping men and women capable of discriminating between the gold and the dross of our times, and aware of the service that a citizen in a democracy must render if free institutions are to survive.

MR. TRAUM: Thank you very much, Mr. Wadsworth.

We hear next from a prominent businessman who has had an active career in education and civic affairs. President of Hart Schaffner and Marx since 1941, Meyer Kestnbaum is Chairman of President Eisenhower's Commission on Inter-governmental Relations, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Committee for Economic Development and a trustee of the Chicago Educational Television Association. Welcome to TOWN MEETING, Meyer Kestnbaum!

MR. KESTNBAUM: The American people have always taken a deep interest in the subject of education. Our founding fathers recognized that they were establishing a form of government which was peculiarly dependent on an educated citizenry. Madison, in one of the Federalist papers wrote, "...a popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy or perhaps both."

Under our federal system the responsibility to provide for public education rests with the states. The states, in turn, have quite generally delegated this responsibility, and the requisite taxing power, to the school districts. The high degree of local interest and local participation in our schools is one of our prized traditions.

To an increasing degree, however, we have come to feel that education is an appropriate subject for national policy. The recent Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation is but one, though perhaps the most striking expression of this national interest. We have for many years had Federal grants for instruction in agriculture, for vocational training, even for school lunches.

We now face some difficult questions in determining the degree to which the national government should assume responsibility for education. Does the national interest

justify and permit the establishment of certain minimum standards in all states? Will this require Federal aid for education, either in terms of general support or some special program of aid for school construction? These issues will be hotly debated.

Another set of issues, even more fundamental, arises in connection with the kind of instruction that is given in the schools. There can be no doubt that a society has the duty of educating its young people for the responsibilities of citizenship. Such education should certainly provide an understanding of the country's history and cultural values. There are those, however, who would go much farther and require the schools to undertake various forms of indoctrination. On the ground that schools should put more emphasis on "The American Way" many groups would direct the curriculum, censor the textbooks and examine the teachers. Other groups argue that the schools ought to prepare the next generation for the broad social changes that they consider necessary for the improvement of our society. To paraphrase what one statesman said about war and the military, we have many people who feel that education is too important a subject to be left to the educators.

In the field of elementary and secondary education our difficulties arise from the fact that education is a matter of both public and private concern. We must prepare our young people to take part in our economic life. We must enable them to meet the responsibilities of citizenship, and we must give them some understanding of the great social and economic issues with which we are confronted. We must preserve the tradition of freedom in our educational institutions and in our educational system and we must preserve as one of our basic safeguards the tradition of local citizen participation in the conduct of our schools.

MR. TRAUM: Thank you, Mr. Kestnbaum.

Organized labor has a vital stake in education too and it is especially appropriate on this Labor Day weekend that we hear the views of a union official. David Dolnick, a former instructor and labor relations consultant, is director of research for the AFL's Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen. Welcome to TOWN MEETING, David Dolnick!

MR. DOLNICK: If our democratic form of government is to remain strong, equality of educational opportunity must be vigilantly guarded. The principle of the Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal" becomes meaningful only if all children are given opportunity to develop their abilities to their maximum. Discrimination on the basis of race, color or religion is no longer national policy, but discrimination on the basis of alleged ability, determined by I.Q. tests, does exist. I do not reject educational testing techniques. I know that people are different. But I do not believe that any test yet devised can or should predetermine the learning possibilities of children and young people. I do not believe that the gates to knowledge should be locked shut on any boy or girl by any system of tests and measurements. Too often, and too soon, our young people are syphoned into channels of specialization. Everyone must be given the opportunity for a liberal education. He must be taught how to think and how to discern truth from dogma. He must be trained to become curious.

It is a blight on our schools and colleges that they emphasize the "how" and not the "why" of learning. Functionalism predominates the curricula. What good is it to build a strong bridge which will stand firm for ages if that bridge does not contribute to the well-being of the people in the community?

Lest there be some question about my disrespect for vocational training, let me dispel it immediately. I believe that vocational training should be an integral part of our educational system -- but it should come only after the individual has had a full opportunity for education through the level of college.

The curricula for vocational training should be planned and administered by school administrators, teachers, businessmen and trade union representatives. Each has something to contribute and their combined efforts are necessary to the overall plan. Apprenticeship, too, should be the combined enterprise of schools, labor and management. New and improved machines and automation in industry are making rapid strides. This means that we need to train more skilled individuals if our economy is to grow and if our standard of living is to improve. It means, too, that we need to expand and extend adult education programs.

Education is not a product of schools alone. The home and the neighborhood play an important role in the learning process of our young people. To that end we must ever be vigilant to guard against poverty and its effects. Slum areas must be cleared and good housing provided; economic security for the family must be achieved. Without these, no educational system, however liberal, can meet the needs of a democracy. Discontent, hunger and filth breed anti-democratic desperation and encourage the activities of the demagogues.

The cause of education needs support from all citizens. For good schools, good teachers and a good curricula, we must have sufficient physical plants, sound teacher-training programs, competent school administrations and the help of expert educational consultants. Where communities are not able to provide these facilities and personnel, our federal government should step in. It must provide aid to states and communities; it must help support colleges and universities training teachers and school administrators; it must encourage educational research; above all it must promote educational policies which will bring about a more enlightened citizenship to keep us free and democratic.

MR. TRAUM: Thank you very much, David Dolnick.

For many years an outspoken critic of certain of our educational functions, Dr. Mortimer J. Adler is a former professor at Columbia and the University of Chicago. He edited the Great Books of the Western World and has written several books of his own, including a two-volume reference work on Great Ideas of the Western World and the best seller, "How to Read a Book." Let us hear now from the director of the Institute of Philosophical Research, Mortimer J. Adler. Dr. Adler!

DR. ADLER: The really great issues in education, as distinguished from the merely practical problems that schoolmasters face from day to day, are all of them basic philosophical issues. They are issues about the nature of man and his powers, especially his power of learning. They are issues about the nature of knowledge and of virtue. They are issues about man's social obligations, his relation to other men, and to the society in which he lives.

According as we take different stands on these fundamental issues, we necessarily hold different views of what should be done about the education of human beings.

About education itself -- what it is and what it involves -- there can be little dispute. Everyone understands education as a process by which human beings are improved by means and methods specifically devised for that purpose. No one in his right mind would regard a process of human deterioration as education, nor would anyone regard a man who devised a method for corrupting other men as an educator.

From this understanding of education as a process of human improvement, it would seem to follow that education is co-extensive with the process of living itself, certainly insofar as living involves mental, moral and spiritual growth. No one in his right mind would, therefore, regard schooling -- from kindergarten through college -- as the whole of education. Moreover, since schooling is that part of education which occurs in childhood or youth, it is at best a preparatory phase of education and probably the least important part of education.

But what are the ends or goals of the whole process of education, of which schooling is only the initial phase? Since education is co-extensive with life, they must be identical with the ends of human life, the ultimate good human beings strive for throughout a lifetime. It is with respect to these ends that we begin to face the great issues in education.

If the only goods worth striving for are money, fame and power, or plenty of idleness and pleasure; if the only knowledge worth having is to be found in the empirical sciences, and wisdom is only an empty name; if social adjustment through conformity to the group is the order of the day rather than loyalty to the ideals of truth and justice, even if that leads to martyrdom, then the content of education cannot help being the poor thing it is in America today.

On all these basic moral and political issues, I hold a view precisely opposite to that which prevails today in the United States; and, consequently, I would like to

see American education radically reformed from top to bottom. I shall try to defend this view as we go on with the discussion.

MR. TRAUM: We shall now go into our speakers views in further detail and to moderate this discussion it is indeed a pleasure to introduce the President of The Great Books Foundation, Gordon J. Dupee. A graduate of the University of Wisconsin, associated with the University of Chicago and the Great Books idea for more than ten years, Mr. Dupee has been President of The Foundation since 1953. Gordon Dupee!

MR. DUPEE: Gentlemen, I think the issue has been joined and I would like to start by posing a question to Dr. Adler. It has been suggested that all the crises that the world faces today are moral crises. The question I would like to ask you is: does the education we afford our young today equip them to face the moral problems that confront the world?

DR. ADLER: I don't think so, Mr. Dupee. It seems to me that the problem that faces America today is a difficult one to solve because there is a vicious circle of trying to change the moral level of the country at the same time that the education of the country is controlled by its moral level. Plato had, I think, a very wise remark when he said that what is honored in a country is cultivated there and I think education in America reflects the level of moral values that prevail in America. The question is: how can we, by American education since it reflects the moral values that prevail in America, change that level of those values themselves. It is a very difficult question to solve and I think the only answer is by means of adult education, and I'd like to add of the kind that The Great Books Foundation is doing, because it seems to me that only by making Americans realize that the values they tend to accept without criticism are open to serious question, can you get them to think about these values in a critical, reflective way.

MR. DUPEE: Thank you, Dr. Adler. Let me turn the question to Mr. Kestnbaum. Do you think, as Dr. Adler has suggested, that the country will educate only in terms of the values that honor us and, if so, what are these values?

MR. KESTNBAUM: Mr. Dupee, I would like to suggest first that I think Mr. Adler is a little too pessimistic. I know he is a perfectionist. It seems to me that we have, on the whole, done a rather good job in educating our people. Take the standing of our society, the degree of education, the wide-spread interest in education, the fact that we give more than any other country suggests that we value education and that we recognize its powers and its possibilities. Now, our people are not perfect. I suspect that even with perfect education they would not be perfect. It seems to me that the educational process, as Dr. Adler has suggested, goes on all through life and that formal education is a small part of it and that while we do want to improve it and can improve it substantially, particularly on placing greater emphasis on moral values, placing greater emphasis on understanding of our complicated problems and placing greater reliance on our old traditions of freedom of inquiry and liberty, we can do a better job -- but I would not agree to the proposition that our educational system is a failure or that we are in our present state because of inadequate education or even that the world is in bad shape because education itself has fallen down. As I look at the problems that we face today, it seems to me we have the very two central problems -- one, to understand. I'm now addressing myself to social, political and economic problems, the problem of understanding them. And in the area of moral values, try to recognize which of the great traditions that we have at our disposal, or rather how to achieve a better acceptance and understanding of the great moral traditions which we have at our disposal. We are not lacking in an understanding of what the moral values are.

MR. DUPEE: I think you suggested, Mr. Wadsworth, that the thing that was more important -- that thing to which all else was subordinate in education -- was the teacher. Let me put the question bluntly -- do you think the teacher has succeeded or failed in American education?

MR. WADSWORTH: Well, Mr. Dupee, this is the kind of question that it is impossible for any person really to answer. The fact of the situation is that consider-

ing the fact that this country, the first in all recorded history to attempt to offer universal education through the secondary schools and increasingly in colleges to all of its people and faced with great floods of people who want to make the very best of an opportunity extended to them through various levels of government, the remarkable thing is that as good a job as has been done has been somehow accomplished, and that as many dedicated people -- people interested, incidentally, in values as much as Professor Adler and all of the rest of us -- have dedicated thier lives to teaching although the remunerations and other things that come to them are far less significant than to those paid for other comparable positions. Now, this isn't entirely a matter of income or what we pay a teacher. I would say that we made great progress, that we have many fine teachers, but there is much room for improvement. I would add as well that the problem of teaching moral values in schools is also a problem which involves dealing with the diversity of cultural background, the diversity of religious beliefs, the diversity of valued judgment that as Americans we insist upon expressing as a democratic people. I would doubt that we are, at the moment, in a position to create a value system to which all American people would agree.

MR. DUPEE: Dr. Adler, I see that you are shaking your head.

DR. ADLER: Not with Mr. Wadsworth's last remark. It seems to me that Mr. Wadsworth said something earlier that I'd like to return to, if I may, in answer to Mr. Kestnbaum. I thought Mr. Wadsworth said something very telling when he said that the American people, in general, cherish the illusion that education is a royal road to fame and fortune. I think that the American parent is the worst enemy to American education. Most American parents send their children to school and college, sacrifice to send their children to school and college, because they think this is the high road to success. This is the worst possible aim for education. When people regard education as a means for achieving success in life, education will necessarily fail and fall.

MR. DUPEE: Mr. Dolnick, I have a feeling that you want to say something on that.

MR. DOLNICK: Children go to college for the purpose of an education. I don't think we, as a democratic people, should deprive any child of an opportunity for a college education. The problem arises rather of what kind of a college education. If he's going to college and receives a liberal education which will make him a good citizen and think straight, then college education is worthwhile. If he's going to college to become a professional career man, some kind of technical individual, that kind of college education isn't the kind of education we're talking about.

DR. ADLER: It seems to me this panel is so much better than American education is that we ought to call attention to the fact. Mr. Dolnick, for example, said tonight -- I thought remarkably clearly -- that there should be no vocational training in the schools until after college education has been completed. If this were the case in American education, American education would be good, but this is not the case.

MR. WADSWORTH: Well, Mr. Dupee, of course, let me commit the fatal heresy here by saying a good word for vocational education. Mr. Dolnick's view is an interesting one. I doubt, in spite of the remarkable strides made in extending educational opportunity, that the greater portion of those who want to go to college are going to be able to do it. I note also from what I know about high school boys and girls that our present testing indicates that about 60% of the boys and girls who are in high schools are youngsters who do not have the intelligence necessary to do college work at an appropriate level. Now returning for a moment to the subject of vocational education -- this is a very complex world. We require trained people. The encouraging thing to me has been at the collegiate level the extent to which you now have very substantial components of liberal arts training as a requirement in engineering, in law, in medicine and most of the other vocational pursuits of the country. This is a healthy development, but I would urge us not to believe that it is possible to train all people at the undergraduate level as liberal

arts candidates which presupposes that everybody is going to be able to do graduate work. Somebody must do the work of the world.

MR. DUPEE: Mr. Wadsworth, I have a feeling that Mr. Dolnick is anxious to get in on this.

MR. DOLNICK: It isn't a question of graduate work at all. It isn't a question of becoming a Ph.D. in some liberal arts course, but rather the securing of fundamentals -- how to think before he becomes a good carpenter, before he becomes a good lawyer.

DR. ADLER: In addition, Mr. Dolnick said a moment ago, which I wholly agree with, that I.Q. tests, no matter how well they perfect it, are no measure of a person's ability to receive a college education. Every human being who isn't in an asylum should go through college.

MR. BUPEE: Excuse me, Dr. Adler, Mr. Kestnbaum wants to get in on this.

MR. KESTNBAUM: And, very happily, Mr. Adler, just gave me the note on which I wish to dissent. I do not believe that we have yet reached the point in our society which will enable us to provide a college education for every citizen. I wish it were so. I think it is not yet so. In fact, I think we have achieved something quite remarkable in having established the fact that our young people will have at least high school education. I should like to suggest that it is possible, up to the end of the final high school year, that is to say by the age of 18, to give our young people the elements of a basic liberal education provided we do not distract them with some courses which are neither liberal nor strictly vocational but which, I think, are a heritage from some older ideas on the subject. It seems to me that the issue, in terms of national policy, ought to deal with elementary and secondary education because higher education, which includes professional education and highly diverse forms of education, is something about which the educators have something to say to be sure but in terms of our national policy, at least for this discussion, it seems to me that we're talking primarily of that education which is available to all, namely education through the high school level.

MR. DUPEE: This is a unique position for a moderator because I find myself with a leader of labor and a philosopher, lining up against an educator and a businessman. Mr. Wadsworth?

MR. WADSWORTH: I just wanted to make this point with reference to the measurement of young people, particularly since the question of I.Q. tests has come up. The purpose of a test of this sort is not to discriminate against the person who is getting the test. The purpose is to give the teacher insight into the nature of the student and to assist the teacher in dealing with the student and the student's problems. Now, as such, it's purely a tool, it's purely also the kind of tool that's used progressively because of change in people as they grow and develop. I don't believe, Mr. Dolnick, that you can regard the present kinds of tests of measurement that are administered in public schools as in any way discriminatory against any student in any school system.

MR. DOLNICK: Discriminatory only in the sense that the person is directed away from liberal education. In that sense it is discriminatory.

DR. ADLER: I would just like to add a word to Mr. Kestnbaum's point. He is quite right in saying that secondary education is as far as we've gone as common compulsory schooling for our young people but with the age of automation upon us, and with an increasing problem of full employment, I feel pretty confident that within another fifty years going through college will be a common and general educational process, as high school is now, as elementary school was fifty years ago.

MR. TRAUM: Mr. Dupee and gentlemen, I am very sorry to have to interrupt you. We have a great many questions ready in the audience here at this summer institute of the Great Books Foundation and we would like to go to that just as soon as possible. However, I would like to announce the winner of the American Peoples Encyclopedia for submitting this question on this particular topic. He is John L. Lobingier of Winchester, Massachusetts and, Mr. Kestnbaum, I would like to direct Mr. Lobingier's question to you. He asks: "What is the answer to the dilemma of the recognized need for greater expenditures for education and the mounting burdens of the average taxpayer?"

MR. KESTNBAUM: It seems to me that this is not quite a dilemma. It strikes me as being a very practical problem. If you want more education it's going to cost more money and if it costs more money, our taxpayers are going to have to provide it. I see no way out of that difficulty. I should like to suggest, however, two points. First, I recall that we had a reduction in federal taxes last year, something like 6 billion dollars, which ought to provide a tax base for a substantial portion of the additional money that is needed for education. Secondly, I should say that with very, very few exceptions, there is no state in the United States that cannot provide adequate education for its citizens without imposing an unreasonable tax burden on the people or the taxpayers.

MR. TRAUM: Thank you, Mr. Kestnbaum, and now we're ready with our audience questions and we'll take the gentleman down here first.

QUESTIONER: Mr. Wadsworth, we will undoubtedly be faced with the problem of large classes of say, 30 to 35 students, for some time to come. How can we then give the exceptional student the attention his ability merits?

MR. WADSWORTH: This is obviously one of the most difficult problems facing public education today. The conception upon which most public education in this country is based is on respect for individual differences which presupposes that the teacher will have sufficient time and few enough students to give individual attention to the needs of students. The only possible answer to this problem is along two lines, as I see it. One, to reduce the size of classes and this means more money for education, for plant and for teachers. I think secondly it means the engagement of special personnel within school systems to deal with the problems of exceptional children, whether they be exceptionally gifted children or children with difficulties requiring assistance through remedial reading and things of that sort. A very difficult problem, the problem of the gifted child especially, since much of your accent in public education necessarily must be on the mass of students who come into the systems. I think progress is being made on it, however.

DR. ADLER: May I suggest that if we cannot decrease the ratio of number of students per teacher, we ought to use more teacher time for the less gifted student and less teacher time for the more gifted student. The gifted students don't need teachers.

QUESTIONER: Mr. Kestnbaum, do not such examples as the Northwest Ordinance, the Land Grant College Act, to speak of pre 1932 days, dispute the thesis that the responsibility for education rests with the states rather than the federal government?

MR. KESTNBAUM: I would refer you to the Constitutions of the states themselves and I think almost without exception they recite that the state has the responsibility for providing for the education of its citizens and, as a matter of fact, you know that the school districts usually supported by some equalization fund from the states do provide the elementary and secondary education in the United States. Now, you are quite right in suggesting that we have always shown a national interest in education from the very first land grants made for purposes of making education possible and from the land grant colleges; as I have indicated, from subsequent grants for vocational education, etc. There is, one might say, a joint -- there certainly is a national interest -- there is a national responsibility which is expressed in a great many ways but the actual conduct of the schools is the responsibility of the states and is, in turn, turned over by them, almost invariably, to the school districts. The national interest is one of trying to see to it that there is a climate and an economic basis for adequate instruction throughout the nation and, as I have indicated, in the case of the Supreme Court decision, the recognition of the national interest in equal facilities for all citizens but the job of education is, under our federal system, the state responsibility.

MR. DOLNICK: It seems to me that the federal government should do more than just show an interest. The federal government ought to know where the system fails in some of our school systems in the states and the cities and use their offices to improve that kind of education by aiding the states.

QUESTIONER: Mr. Dolnick, what kind of change in the content of high school curricula is indicated by your advice that vocational training be postponed until beyond that level?

MR. DOLNICK: I said that vocational training, whether it be a mechanical trade or a profession, should come after the individual young man or young woman has had an opportunity for a liberal education. Now, what I did not say was how many years of liberal education. I said at the college level and educators will disagree on what is a normal college level in terms of years. When you train a young man and woman how to think and to discriminate between facts and fiction, then that young man and woman may become a better carpenter or a better plumber or a better engineer or a better lawyer or doctor, or any other kind of profession.

QUESTIONER: Do I understand that you would exclude such things as typing and machine shop from the high school?

MR. DOLNICK: I would exclude that only for those who have the mental capacity to continue on a liberal education. Of course, people are unequal and people who cannot learn the liberal arts or a general education must be trained for livelihood, but I feel in my own mind that too many young people with ability to receive a liberal education are syphoned off into the vocational trades.

DR. ADLER: Mr. Dolnick has weakened his case a little bit. There is no young person, as I have said before, outside of an asylum, that is not capable of a liberal education. If there are any, then those citizens shouldn't be citizens and democracy is wrong. If we assume that they all can be citizens we must, I think, believe that they have the talent, the native power to be liberally educated and, it seems to me, that the only other thing that should be added here is that this is not a matter of courses. Carpentry, for example, taught not for the sake of earning a living but for the sake of learning this art is a liberal subject. Any subject can be taught liberally except perhaps typing, which is entirely utilitarian but any subject which is taught merely for the sake of earning a living should be excluded completely from the school system.

MR. WADSWORTH: Of course, Professor Adler has now made the point which makes it possible to offer a wide variety of vocational courses in schools.

DR. ADLER: Not for vocational purposes.

MR. WADSWORTH: Well, if we return to my central point which was that what is of paramount importance is the quality of the teacher -- the concern of the teacher for his students -- the quality of person the teacher is -- the teacher gives a good deal more than carpentry, a good deal more than printing, a good deal more than English or whatever the subject may be. Therefore, it is possible to teach all of these subjects in a liberal way as education for life.

DR. ADLER: I agree it is possible to do so. My only complaint is that it is not being done that way in American education today.

MR. KESTINBAUM: I am troubled by this distinction -- this emphasis on the great conflict between liberal and vocational education. It has already been conceded that if done in the right way and in the right spirit, vocational education can be liberal or rather that some things now classified as vocational education could be liberal. The point I would like to suggest, Mr. Adler, is that we have a great deal to learn in a complicated society which has to do with the ordinary problems of life. This is not well taught in the home. I do not suggest that it be a part of the school curriculum but I suggest that somewhere we need to know something about the very complex mechanical side of our lives and that this can be done, if not as part of, certainly as auxiliary or supplementary to a school program. Secondly, I am troubled by Mr. Dolnick's suggestion that all this is going to be done at the college level. We are not yet at the point, but I hope we will be some day, which will permit everyone to have a college education and then to specialize, but I would question the wisdom of saying that the man who is going to study automobile mechanics should be required first to complete a college course and then take a course in automobile mechanics. I think it is a practical matter. We have got to recognize these differences to which we have referred, and that some people are really quite happy and fulfill their lives very satisfactorily

and can be liberally educated and still do some very, very important work which is not a direct product, or not directly related to a college liberal education.

QUESTIONER: Dr. Adler, what do you believe should be the first aim of American public school education and could it be one on which most of our educators would be able to agree?

DR. ADLER: I cannot answer the second part of your question. I don't expect to agree with some educators as I would not expect to agree with men in general but I can at least answer the first part of your question which is what I think the aim of American schooling should be. It should be to prepare the young people to get more education in adult life. That's all.

QUESTIONER: Dr. Adler, every professional education that I know of today and every education in what you have called the empirical sciences -- and these are all educations worthy of human beings to pursue, I think -- is bursting at the seams with new knowledge. Engineering schools want a longer curriculum. Medical schools are afraid that in the next 10 or 20 years they may have to have a longer curriculum. Forty is too old to begin the practice of surgery. Where does the time come for this four years?

DR. ADLER: I think this is a good question and I think there is an answer to it that is practical. If we return to the old-fashioned curriculum which only had solids in it, basic liberal education could be given in twelve years at the most and a Bachelor of Arts degree awarded at what is now the end of high school. You could actually cut out four years of American education, either college or high school, and do the basic job.

QUESTIONER: Mr. Wadsworth, how can we encourage educators to instill in their students the desire to learn and to integrate such learning into everyday living?

MR. WADSWORTH: Well, this is the big question, of course, for it presupposes, and I believe quite correctly, that essentially the only real discipline in education is self-discipline and I think you use the proper word in saying "instill." If we know this answer I think we would have a relatively simply problem. Unfortunately, we vary a lot as people. More is done along these lines, however, than we appreciate in the public schools today. I wish I knew the answer to your question. I doubt that there is one that we could all agree upon. Professor Adler, how about you on this one?

DR. ADLER: I think this is a problem of the art of teaching, about which there is no general formula. My own feeling is that the only way in which teaching can be done is by having the teacher himself or herself learning. I think our problem is that we are producing trained teachers and uneducated teachers, teachers who being uneducated have no spirit of learning. Unless the teacher himself or herself is really driven by the desire to learning, that can't be passed on to the students. Students learn under the incentive of, shall I say, the excitement about learning and the teacher must manifest that excitement.

MR. TRAUM: Thank you, Dr. Adler. I regret very much to terminate these questions but while we still have time, let's bring back Gordon Dupee, the President of The Great Books Foundation for a summary of this hour. Mr. Dupee!

MR. DUPEE: Gentlemen, I suggested that we joined the issue. It seems to me that we have also split the issue this evening. Let me see if I can summarize briefly what are the issues that have been laid before us. Mr. Wadsworth has divided education between the practical and the philosophical, and has suggested that the crucial matter is the quality of the teacher -- the teacher is the key problem in education.

Mr. Kestnbaum has suggested that education in a democracy has the danger of falling into education for indoctrination of a particular way, and has stressed the importance of the local citizen -- the participation of all of us in education.

Mr. Dolnick has suggested that there really is no test for determining the intellectual capacity of a student and, therefore, any method which discriminates

and gives us first class and second class students in an educational system is wrong and, as a labor leader, he has made the very interesting suggestion that vocational training should come after each has had a full opportunity for at least a college education.

Dr. Adler, in his traditional way, has suggested that the schooling or what we traditionally call education, is really not education at all, but is simply a preparation for education which is a lifetime business and, at best, is beginning to take place only when each individual has become what we call an adult -- and that the function of public education is to afford the best liberal education, or liberal training, for the preparation of a lifelong education.

Cutting across all of these, it seems to me there has been a division between the practical problems and the end of education. There has been some discussion, and it is a crucial problem, of how to finance the plan of education, how to meet the tremendous bulge in the population of students that are demanding education. On the other hand has been the question -- are we educating and, if so, are we asking ourselves the question: education for what? What kind of human beings are we hoping to produce through education?

MR. TRAUM: Thank you very much, Gordon Dupee, for that distinct summary and thanks also to our speakers, Homer C. Wadsworth, Meyer Kestnbaum, David Dolnick and Mortimer J. Adler, for your very thoughtful analysis of the "Great Issues in Education."

Our appreciation to our hosts here at Aspen, Colorado, The Great Books Foundation, especially its public relations director, Leslie Slote.

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